

Division of Family & Children



Demographic Trend ^{SEY}2003 Report

Bureau of
Family Resources

Section C
Food Stamps



THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

What is the Food Stamp program?

The Food Stamp Program is designed to raise the nutritional level of low-income households by supplementing their available food purchasing dollars with food stamp benefits. Information regarding nutrition and budgeting is available to participants to assist in choosing a nutritionally sound diet with limited income. Program participants are entitled to use their food stamp benefits at the retailer of their choice and choose foods based on their own preferences. However, retailers must be federally approved to accept food stamp benefits. Non-food items may not be legally purchased with food stamp benefits.

Implementation of the Food Stamp program is governed by federal regulations developed by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services section pursuant to federal legislation and administered through state level agencies. In Indiana, the Family and Social Services Administration is responsible for ensuring that these federal regulations are implemented and consistently applied in each county. The food stamp benefit is funded 100% by federal dollars while administrative costs are paid for with a combination of state and federal funds.

The local Office of the Division of Family and Children in each of Indiana's ninety-two counties has the responsibility for processing applications, certifying eligible applicants for participation, and issuing benefits.

Who is eligible for the Food Stamp program?

In order to qualify for food stamp benefits applicants/participants must meet both non-financial and financial requirements. Non-financial requirements include state residency, citizenship/alien status, work registration and cooperation with the IMPACT Program. The financial criteria are income and asset limits. If an applicant is eligible based on the federally established financial and non-financial requirements, the allotment of food stamp benefits they receive is based on their household size and net monthly income after all allowable deductions are subtracted. Deductions include standard and Shelter deductions.

The asset/resource limits are \$2,000 per household except for households containing a member age 60 or older; then the limit is \$3,000. Assets include bank accounts, cash, real estate, personal property, vehicles, etc. The household's home and surrounding lot, household goods and personal belongings and life insurance policies are not counted as assets in the Food Stamp Program.

All households (except those with elderly or disabled members) must pass a gross income test (130 percent of Federal Poverty Level) to qualify for benefits. The gross income is per household size and based on the gross monthly income received by all household members.

Households with elderly or disabled members, as well as households which pass the gross income test, must also pass a net income test to qualify. The net income is determined by subtracting certain allowable deductions from the gross income.

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Income eligibility levels and allotments are shown in the following table.

FEDERAL FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

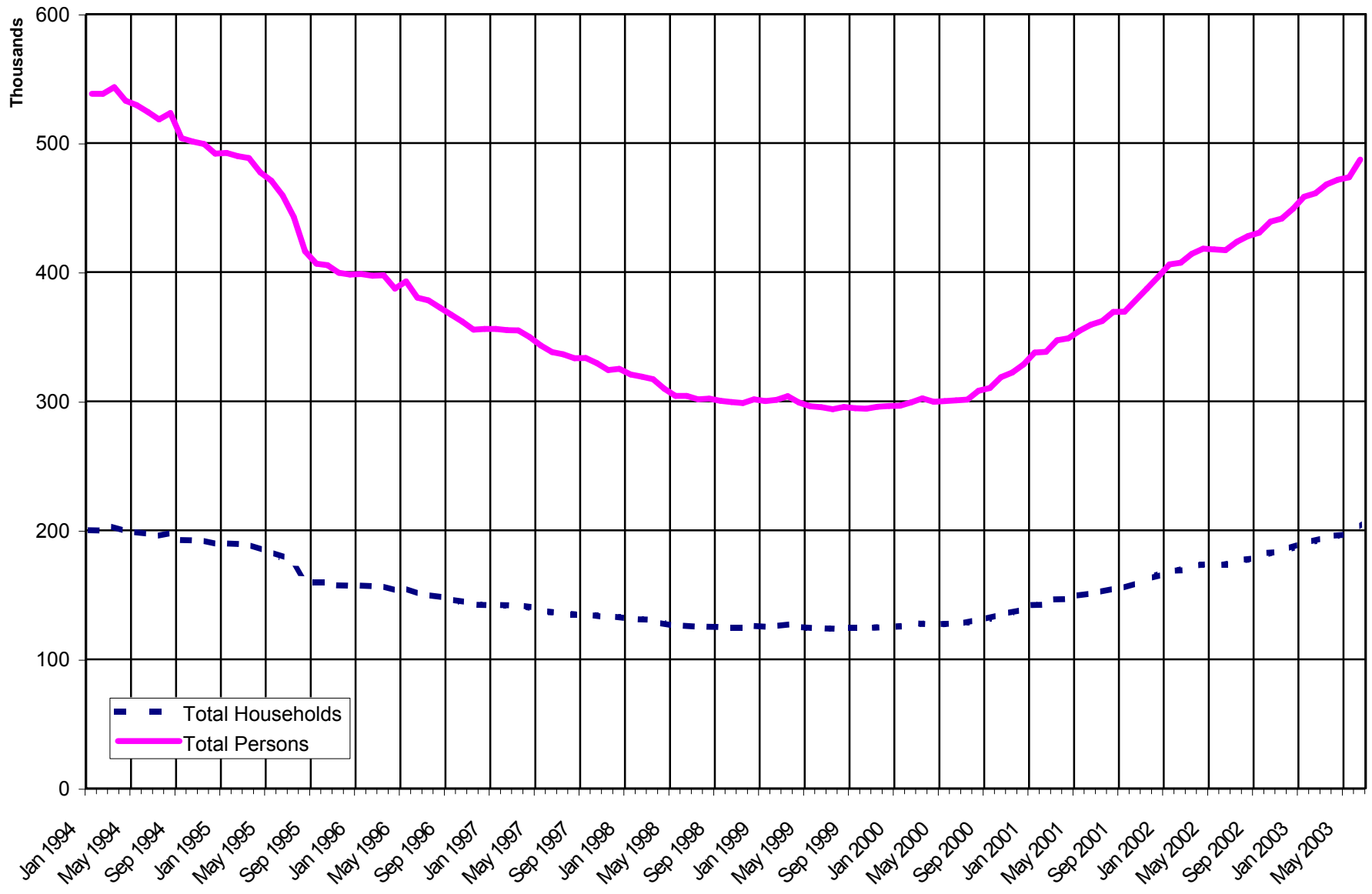
HOUSEHOLD SIZE	Effective October 1, 2002		
	MAXIMUM GROSS MONTHLY INCOME 130% OF POVERTY LEVEL	MAXIMUM NET MONTHLY INCOME 100% OF POVERTY LEVEL	MAXIMUM ALLOTMENT *(BASED ON ZERO INCOME)
1	\$960	\$739	\$139
2	\$1,294	\$995	\$256
3	\$1,628	\$1,252	\$366
4	\$1,961	\$1,509	\$465
5	\$2,295	\$1,765	\$553
6	\$2,629	\$2,022	\$663
7	\$2,962	\$2,279	\$733
8	\$3,296	\$2,535	\$838
9	\$3,630	\$2,792	\$943
10	\$3,964	\$3,049	\$1,048
Each Additional Member	\$334	\$257	\$105

How Are Food Stamps Used?

Food stamp benefits are used like cash to buy eligible items at any store, supermarket or co-op approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Food stamps can only be used for food and for plants and seed to grow food to eat. Sales tax cannot be charged on items bought with food stamps.

Indiana uses an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system for issuance of Food Stamps. All counties have implemented EBT as of 3/1/02. EBT is the electronic distribution of food stamp benefits with benefits accessed using a plastic Hoosier Works card which is similar to a commercial debit or ATM card. Each card has a unique sixteen-digit account number, a magnetic stripe on the back and only works with a four digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) selected by the participant. All retailers who previously accepted food stamps were given the opportunity to participate in the EBT program.

**Food Stamp Households and Persons
From January 1994 to June 2003**



**AVERAGE MONTHLY PERSONS AND TOTAL DOLLARS ISSUED BY COUNTY FOR THE
FOOD STAMP PROGRAM FOR THE STATE FISCAL YEAR 2003**

COUNTY	AVERAGE PERSONS SFY2003	TOTAL DOLLARS SFY2003
Adams	1,420	\$1,417,976
Allen	24,913	\$25,946,545
Bartholomew	4,329	\$4,257,438
Benton	427	\$391,679
Blackford	1,325	\$1,236,443
Boone	1,544	\$1,552,993
Brown	714	\$667,059
Carroll	834	\$847,584
Cass	2,705	\$2,613,221
Clark	5,900	\$5,643,157
Clay	2,098	\$2,035,645
Clinton	2,010	\$1,978,122
Crawford	1,105	\$990,934
Daviess	2,343	\$2,236,740
Dearborn	2,007	\$1,983,964
Decatur	1,578	\$1,520,455
DeKalb	1,494	\$1,432,504
Delaware	10,748	\$10,822,898
Dubois	1,033	\$916,867
Elkhart	12,589	\$12,959,402
Fayette	2,517	\$2,465,129
Floyd	5,483	\$5,592,071
Fountain	1,182	\$1,047,446
Franklin	1,249	\$1,245,662
Fulton	1,465	\$1,374,106
Gibson	1,622	\$1,489,148
Grant	7,278	\$7,071,040
Greene	2,216	\$2,024,481
Hamilton	2,662	\$2,725,837
Hancock	1,792	\$1,778,353
Harrison	2,087	\$1,992,338
Hendricks	2,023	\$1,938,166
Henry	4,001	\$4,038,393
Howard	7,271	\$7,403,450
Huntington	1,908	\$1,707,492
Jackson	2,157	\$2,135,036
Jasper	1,416	\$1,421,529
Jay	1,162	\$1,075,642
Jefferson	2,043	\$2,019,713
Jennings	1,760	\$1,661,138
Johnson	4,790	\$4,941,402
Knox	4,059	\$4,026,613
Kosciusko	2,700	\$2,664,484
LaGrange	693	\$646,281
Lake	61,313	\$65,837,689
LaPorte	8,699	\$8,869,811
Lawrence	2,869	\$2,683,343

COUNTY	AVERAGE PERSONS SFY2003	TOTAL DOLLARS SFY2003
Madison	11,525	\$11,591,618
Marion	90,908	\$99,938,496
Marshall	2,165	\$2,097,004
Martin	811	\$774,282
Miami	2,770	\$2,728,118
Monroe	5,708	\$5,594,247
Montgomery	2,704	\$2,733,596
Morgan	4,668	\$4,715,733
Newton	973	\$961,419
Noble	1,783	\$1,804,653
Ohio	184	\$172,676
Orange	2,074	\$1,878,222
Owen	1,873	\$1,854,921
Parke	1,091	\$1,060,713
Perry	1,020	\$910,394
Pike	942	\$880,933
Porter	6,362	\$6,531,468
Posey	1,467	\$1,436,396
Pulaski	1,011	\$943,913
Putnam	1,476	\$1,465,113
Randolph	2,151	\$2,070,083
Ripley	1,297	\$1,198,868
Rush	1,010	\$963,767
St. Joseph	22,084	\$23,600,079
Scott	2,731	\$2,751,103
Shelby	2,328	\$2,381,899
Spencer	977	\$867,658
Starke	2,324	\$2,245,206
Steuben	1,513	\$1,585,483
Sullivan	1,891	\$1,718,392
Switzerland	621	\$576,618
Tippecanoe	7,806	\$8,182,694
Tipton	773	\$699,236
Union	440	\$388,523
Vanderburgh	16,110	\$15,926,902
Vermillion	1,011	\$861,147
Vigo	10,371	\$9,989,230
Wabash	1,789	\$1,780,007
Warren	342	\$290,199
Warrick	1,913	\$1,750,029
Washington	2,085	\$1,931,747
Wayne	6,400	\$6,263,417
Wells	967	\$947,596
White	1,567	\$1,509,391
Whitley	1,110	\$1,080,563
TOTALS	452,654	\$464,961,171

Percentage of the Population Participating in Food Stamp Program by County
June 2003

